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*Brooklyn Mayor 1887-1891 Alfred C. Chapin*

# THE FUTURE OF BROOKLYN.

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THE CITY'S PROMISED GROWTH AND INCREASE,  
WITH COMMENTS ON THE BUILDING STA-  
TISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1888.

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## MESSAGE

OF THE

HON. ALFRED C. CHAPIN,  
MAYOR.

DECEMBER 13, 1888.

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MAYOR'S OFFICE, }  
CITY HALL, BROOKLYN, }  
December 13, 1888 }

*To the Honorable, the Common Council :*

GENTLEMEN :

In this message I shall attempt a general statement of the condition of the city, and of its building operations. For the purpose of broadly considering the city's present condition and standing among similar communities, the returns of the recent Presidential election furnish valuable data. Presidential elections call out a full vote, and thus afford an indication of the relative growth of the different cities of the country. The following table is believed to correctly state the total number of votes cast in the four leading cities for President at the recent election :

Total vote cast in 1888.

New York.....	270,194
Philadelphia.....	205,747
Brooklyn.....	148,868
Chicago.....	123,475

In 1880 the vote of these several cities in the Presidential election bore the following proportion to the population as shown by the census of the same year :

Number of population to each voter in 1880 :

New York.....	5.87.
Philadelphia.....	4.92.
Brooklyn.....	5.29.
Chicago.....	6.06.

The following table contains the population of each city in 1880, and the apparent population at present, basing the estimate upon the vote of this year, and assuming the ratio of population to the numbers of voters to remain the same as in 1880 :

	Population in 1880.	Apparent population in 1888.
New York.	1,206,299.	1,585,529.
Philadelphia,	847,170.	1,014,332.
Brooklyn,	566,663.	782,221.
Chicago,	503,185.	748,258.

The method of reaching this conclusion cannot be called unduly favorable to our city. The difference in the ratio existing between the population and the voters in 1880 in Chicago and in Brooklyn would seem to indicate either that Chicago possessed an unusually large unnaturalized population, or else that it did not poll its full vote. If the unnaturalized population of our own city is larger than it was in 1880, the above estimate may be too small. If the increase of population since 1880 has been one that brought with it a larger proportion of women and children than the increase before 1880, the above estimate is too small. Whether either



of these possible modifications should be given serious consideration is a matter of conjecture upon which some light may be thrown by what will be set forth in this communication.

The twenty-six wards now comprising the city of Brooklyn, contained in 1880 a population of 580,313 ; if, therefore, their present population as above estimated is 782,221, there has been an increase in eight years of 201,903, or an average annual gain for each of those years of 25,237. But the population in 1870 was 396,099, and in 1875, as enumerated by the State Census, it was 484,616, showing a gain for the five years of 87,518, or an average annually of 17,500. Between 1875 and 1880 it rose to 566,663, the total gain for the five years being 82,047, the average annual gain being 16,400. It should, therefore, first be noticed that the rate of increase of the last decade was more rapid during its first half than during its closing half. The present decade began in a period of more moderate growth than that of some years previous. We may, I think, safely assume that the falling off in the gain between 1875 and 1880 was largely due to the opening of the system of elevated roads in New York City in 1878. Making all necessary allowance for the increase due to the Twenty-sixth Ward, which was not a part of the city in 1880, it is still impossible to believe that the average annual gain of 16,400 which prevailed from 1875 to 1880 could have been abruptly changed to the average annual gain of 25,237 which has pre-

vailed from 1880 to the present time. We must, then, assume that during the years since 1880 the rate of growth of the city has advanced quite materially; and that the average increase of the first three or four years of the present decade may not have been much in excess of the average increase of the five years from 1875 to 1880. A sufficient cause for the change of the rate of growth is furnished in the opening of the Bridge in 1883.

A further promoting cause is found in the opening of the Brooklyn Elevated Railway in 1885. We must, therefore, assume the average annual gain for the past eight years (of 25,237) to be greater than the average gain of the three or four years following 1880. If so, it is obvious that the gains for the present year and for the years immediately preceding must have been greater than 25,000. That the two causes suggested contributed to change the rate of growth is not likely to be questioned by any one. But they are only the accompaniments of a broader and more persistent cause, which is the fundamental reason of the existence of the bridge and of our present system of rapid transit. This larger cause is a general change in the relation between New York and Brooklyn, gradually manifesting itself as a necessary result of the development of the whole metropolitan community surrounding the port of New York. The first two causes, therefore, though permanent, were auxiliary and specific. The last is a general, continuous condition, whose force seems unlikely to decline,

but more likely to augment from year to year. The first two causes, also, may be said to have a fixed or, at all events, an ascertainable maximum influence, based upon their respective capacity to transport passengers. They are merely methods of transit. Their capacity may in time be exhausted. In such case they may be supplemented; new bridges can be built, and doubtless will be; newer elevated railroads have been built and opened for business since the construction of the one already mentioned. More elevated railroads are to be built. In addition to the Brooklyn Elevated Railroad Company, already named, now operating six and three-fourths miles of railroad, the Kings County Elevated Railroad Company is operating five and one-half miles of railroad, and the Union Elevated Railroad Company is operating four and three-fifths miles, forming together a system of nearly seventeen miles, which promises to increase its capacity as well as its mileage. Construction is still progressing upon these lines, and it is reported that at the close of the year 1889, or earlier, there will be twenty-five miles of elevated railroad in operation in the city.

These features of the city's condition call attention to the fact that we have reached a period of development, at which it is our duty to provide clearly and understandingly for the needs of a far greater population than that now included within our limits.

In earlier days Americans did much empty

boasting and made many glorious predictions. At the same time, so far as material preparations are concerned, they could do little for those coming after them. The art of living had not then been studied as it since has been. Sanitary science can hardly be said to have been in its infancy, for in this country it seemed to have no existence whatever. In the establishing of enduring and fundamental principles of government, and in the field of law much was done for us and for our posterity by the men of previous generations, but it was necessary that there should be a gradual education of the business sense of the country before men could appreciate the nature and import of the problems now presented in the growth of cities. It was necessary that a more leisurely aspect should come over life; that comfort and health should be more highly prized. The more purely intellectual side of our ancestors' work was well done; but the needs of the by no means distant future, the inheritances which our successors should receive from us, are of a different description. Pavements, sewers, sufficient water supply, parks, schools, public buildings, an enlarged application of the results attained in sanitary science, and the solid work of masonry are the inheritances we should transmit, rather than far reaching adjudications, such as that of the Dartmouth College case, or comprehensive enactments, such as the ordinance establishing the Northwest Territory. Naturally, the greatest and most pressing need will arise here at

the centre of the greatest population. How great that need may be, or how great a population may congregate within our area or upon the borders of the bay of New York, we cannot indeed actually estimate, but to some extent we can forecast it. Such forecasts are not useless. In his message of December, 1861, President Lincoln said: "There are already among us those who, if the Union be preserved, will live to see it contain two hundred and fifty millions." Such a vision of the future, at a time of extreme trial, seemed to him neither vain nor fanciful. Its utterance was evidence that he possessed the sort of political imagination which a statesman should possess if he is to discern the drift of public thought, or to picture the future material condition of his country. When compared with other estimates, his outlook was not extravagant, though it may not be realized. Its concern for us is direct and unavoidable. For the course of history, in our own land and abroad, makes it clear that the population about the port of New York is to hold a place of high importance in the nation, both numerical and otherwise.

The State of New York passed to the first place in population in the nation in 1820. Since that day the population of the Union, of the State of New York, and the combined population of the cities of New York and Brooklyn, at each decade from 1820 to 1880, and the percentage of increase in each decade, have been as follows:

Years.	Population of New York and Brooklyn.	Increase per cent.	Population of the State of New York.	Increase per cent.	Population of the United States.	Increase per cent.
1820	130,881		1,372,111		9,633,822	
1830	215,049	64.3	1,918,608	39.8	12,866,020	32.51
1840	348,943	62.2	2,428,926	26.5	17,069,453	33.52
1850	612,385	75.5	3,097,394	27.5	23,191,876	33.83
1860	1,072,312	75.1	3,880,735	25.2	31,443,321	35.11
1870	1,338,391	24.8	4,382,759	12.9	38,558,371	22.65
1880	1,772,962	32.4	5,082,871	15.9	50,155,783	30.08

Thus the combined population of New York and Brooklyn has at all times since 1830 grown at a rate much more rapid than that of the growth of the State of New York; the rate of growth of the two cities has at all times exceeded the rate of growth of the population of the whole Union, although the rate of growth of the population of the State of New York has not kept pace with that of the population of the United States since 1830. But for the growth of the two cities, the State would, before this time, have ceased to hold the first place. The degree to which the population of the two cities has gained upon that of the State in the whole period, is quite notable. Their proportion of the population of the State in 1820 was less than one-tenth; while in 1880 more than one-third of the population of the State lived in Brooklyn and New York. On the other hand, in 1820, the State of New York included more than one-eighth of the population of the whole Union; while in 1880 it embraced a little less than one-tenth of that population. At present, adopt-

ing the estimates already given, based upon the Presidential vote for this year, New York and Brooklyn include nearly, if not quite, two-fifths of the population of the whole State.

Without adopting Lincoln's prediction, we need only look forward to a time when the country may contain one hundred and fifty million people. Even then, the density of its population will be much less than that of older countries or of some States of the Union. If the population of the State of New York failed to hold its present relation, and fell off until it numbered but eight per cent. or about one-twelfth of the population of the Union, it would still contain more than twelve millions of people, of which a population surpassing one-half might be found in or near these two cities. As the two cities grow, apparently an increasing proportion of that growth must come to Brooklyn. The mere question of area goes far to determine such a result. Each mile of departure from the New York City Hall emphasizes the inequality in the quantity of residence area lying respectively upon Manhattan Island and within our limits. It is four miles from the New York City Hall to Sixtieth street; and the capacity of the area below that street for purposes of residence may be said to be well nigh exhausted. The encroachments of business below that division line seem likely to diminish its capacity to furnish homes nearly as rapidly as improvements in building methods may augment such capacity. Of the



twenty-four Assembly Districts in the City of New York, nineteen—to wit, one to eighteen inclusive, and the twentieth—lie wholly below Fifty-ninth street. In these nineteen districts the increase of registration in 1888 over that of 1884 is 13,641. The remaining five districts lie almost wholly above Fifty-ninth street; and in them the increase is 32,110. Apparently more than seventy per cent. of the growth of New York during the past four years has been north of Fifty-ninth street. Not only must this comparatively fixed condition of New York below Fifty-ninth street remain or become more and more marked, but the line of division between the growing and the fixed parts of the city must rapidly shift from Fifty-ninth street to One Hundred and Tenth street. For of the area between Fifty-ninth street and One Hundred and Tenth street a substantial part is devoted to Central Park, and is unavailable for residences. Furthermore, the presence of Central Park causes land east and west of it to be much sought after, and to command high prices. That part of New York, therefore, which lies between Fifty-ninth street and One Hundred and Tenth street is to be largely taken by people whose means are abundant, and of the space not already occupied, but a small part will be left for the sort of population from which Brooklyn draws its chief and characteristic growth.

How far existing conditions may be disturbed by new means of transit or by new works of life in



New York City, no one can now tell. At present, the broad fact is, that the whole area of Brooklyn (excepting only the more remote parts of the Twenty-sixth Ward, the former town of New Lots) is nearer in distance to the New York City Hall than that part of New York City lying above One Hundred and Tenth street.

Furthermore, the residence area lying between Fifty-ninth and One Hundred and Tenth streets in New York is not one-seventh of that lying between lines of like distance in Kings County.

To attempt a close estimate of the future population of New York and Brooklyn might be neither wise nor profitable. Some conception of the general course or character of that development is the most that is practicable. All nineteenth century progress discloses a tendency to concentration of population. In our own country the inhabitants of cities formed one-thirtieth of the population in 1790 ; one-eighth in 1850 ; and nine-fortieths or half way between one-fifth and one-fourth in 1880. In this State a full one-half of the population dwelt in cities in 1880. The proportion now is not less than three-fifths, and is rapidly approaching, if it has not already reached, five-eighths.

The population of the Union since 1820 has increased at a rate varying by decades from over 35 per cent. to 22.65 per cent. The lowest rate was that of the war decade. The rate per decade since 1870 has been more than 30 per cent. The population of the cities of New York and Brooklyn has at

all times increased more rapidly than that of the nation. This was true even during the war decade, although the marked falling off of their rate of growth in that decade disclosed a decided sensitiveness to whatever influences accelerated or retarded national growth. New York and Brooklyn, indeed, have at all times shown by their rate and character of progress and growth that they are reflections of the development of the nation rather than of that of any State or locality. We may, therefore, safely say that the growth of the united population of New York and Brooklyn hereafter, as in the past, will depend chiefly upon the general progress of the whole nation. How rapid this progress will continue, how great proportions it may finally attain can only be vaguely conjectured. Lincoln's forecast of two hundred and fifty millions of souls during the life time of people who were in existence in 1861, would seem to have been over-sanguine, although it was not without parallel or precedent. The decade between 1850 and 1860, at the close of which he was speaking, had witnessed a most rapid national growth, that is, a rate of more than thirty-five per cent. for the whole Union. Percentages decline as aggregates increase. The rate of thirty per cent. which has prevailed since 1870, would not produce two hundred and fifty millions (250,000,000) of people until after 1940. It is too much to assume that such a rate of national growth will continue. Its continuance for so long a period would involve

an increase of over forty millions (40,000,000) between 1920 and 1930, and over fifty-five millions (55,000,000) between 1930 and 1940. It seems more reasonable to expect a gradual decline in the rate of increase, and that the relation between this country and Europe will more closely approach an equilibrium, accompanied or followed by a diminution of the force of immigration as a factor in our national growth. Immigration in the past has fluctuated widely. The total number of immigrants landing in this country for the whole decade closing in 1880, was less than that for the first five years of the present decade. To what degree the population of the future will dwell in cities can perhaps best be foretold by present indications in our own land, or by the conditions prevailing in more thickly settled nations. Present indications here, as has been pointed out, suggest a city growth more rapid than that of the remainder of the population. Among the older nations, the population of the British Isles may be said to resemble our own most closely. The population of Great Britain and Ireland in 1881 was thirty-five millions (35,000,000). More than one-tenth of this population was contained in London alone. Such an urban population manifestly sustains itself largely if not chiefly upon the commercial and maritime importance of the nation containing it, and only to a minor degree upon the community surrounding it. This condition of existence may never be as emphatically

true of the population about the port of New York as it is of the population of London, yet it has always been believed that the final commercial position of our nation must be one of commanding importance. That belief compels the inference that the great port of the nation and of the continent must continue to attract an enormous population. That the present rate of growth, which adds 30 per cent. to the population of New York, and more than 40 per cent. to that of Brooklyn, in every ten years, will endure, need not be expected. The results of a computation upon such a basis seem incredible, since they call for a population of three million five hundred thousand (3,500,000) in New York in 1920, and of two million two hundred thousand (2,200,000) in Brooklyn at the same time. But we may well believe that in the nation there will be a gradual approach to the density of population now maintained in older countries; that this port will hold its place as a general point of concentration and distribution for the nation, the continent, perhaps for the world; and that the excess of residence area in and about our own city over the corresponding area of New York must continue to tell in our favor, probably with increasing force.

Looking back no further than 1850, and comparing the two cities with each other, the following table shows their numbers and rate of growth in the successive decades:

Years.	Population of New York.	Increase per cent.	Population of Brooklyn.	Increase per cent.
1850	515,547		96,838	
1860	805,651	56.2	266,661	175.3
1870	942,292	16.9	396,099	48.5
1880	1,206,299	28.0	566,663	43.0

As the present Twenty-sixth Ward of Brooklyn was not a part of the city in 1880, a comparison of the population of Brooklyn, as the city is now constituted, with the population of the City of New York would be as follows:

The figures for 1888 for both cities are estimated on the basis already stated.

Year.	New York.	Increase per cent.	Brooklyn.	Increase per cent.
1880	1,206,299		580,318	
1888	1,585,529		782,221	
	379,230	23.9 3 pr. cent. per year.	201,903	34.7 4.3 pr. ct. per year.

The records of the Building Department aid in testing the estimates already submitted, and more strikingly in disclosing the character of the population now coming to us. During the twelve months ending on November 30 of this year, 4,226 permits were granted for buildings of all varieties, estimated by their projectors to cost \$22,377,825. The esti-

mated value of this proposed construction has not been exceeded during any similar period in the City's history. The buildings of a residence description were to furnish accommodation for 10,457 families. Not every building for which a permit is issued is afterwards completed, but the magnitude of the volume of the business of this department—even after making all reasonable deductions for the plans not carried out—at least justifies all that has been said thus far concerning the City's present proportions and rate of progress. The United States census of 1880 declared the City's population of 566,663 to be contained in 115,076 families; thus fixing the average membership of each family at 4.92. It is hardly credible therefore that the permits issued for residence purposes during the past year represent the City's actual growth during any given period of twelve months. If families now average as then, these permits would furnish homes for more than 51,000 souls—a number, to my mind, in excess of the City's yearly growth. We must, therefore, assume that there is some discrepancy between the methods of designation employed in 1880 by the United States officials and those of the building department, or that the average number of persons in each family is now less than in 1880, or that these permits represent more than the actual needs of the period during which they were granted. Probably the last supposition is best founded. Like New York, the City may have been overbuilt during the past two or three years, and this record, no doubt,

exhibits some permits not acted upon and some construction due to the impetus of the speculative ardor of 1885, 1886, and 1887. This view is confirmed by the statement of the number and cost of the buildings actually completed during the calendar years 1886 and 1887, and the first eleven months of the present year.

Year.	No. of Buildings.	Estimated Cost.
1886.	3,990.	\$20,318,485.
1887.	3,875.	18,008,325.
1888 to Dec. 1.	3,155.	15,711,070.

While these figures, together with the record of the twelve months ending upon November 30, 1888, as already given, can not, from their nature, lead to a precise mathematical conclusion, they indicate most clearly a degree of activity in construction in which a slight decline in rapidity might be a cause for congratulation rather than for regret. The substantial prosperity of the City was at one time threatened by the over-speculative temper of builders. Conservative witnesses now think that the normal relation of supply and demand has been partially restored. The interests of labor are directly concerned to avoid premature and forced development in so important an industry. Those who lend upon real estate security, and all who deposit in savings banks which make such loans, are not less concerned that our growth should represent the response to actual demand, and not inconsiderate and headlong enterprise.



Further analysis of the permits issued during the twelve months ending November 30, 1888, is of interest.

Of the 10,457 families for whose accommodation residence permits were issued, nineteen were to live in factories, stables, shops, or business offices, three thousand six hundred and seventy-two (3,672), were to live in 1,011 flats, to be erected at the estimated cost of \$4,903,513. The average investment of capital to furnish a home for each of these families would seem to be \$1,338, *plus* the cost of the land. 2,456 families were to live in 713 buildings described as flats and stores, to be erected at a cost of \$4,303,784, calling for an average investment for each family of \$1,752 less the cost of the store, *plus* the cost of land. It may be safely stated that the distinction between these two variety of residences is in general not great. If, therefore, we call the average cost of the flat the same in each case, \$1,338, *plus* the cost of the land, we shall not be far wrong. Neither do we err much if the value of the land is estimated to be one-third that of the building. It would thus appear that 6,128 families were to be given homes representing on the average an investment of \$1,784. The owner of such property would probably demand \$175 per year average rental, and since rent may be reckoned as forming one-fourth of the cost of living with these families, it would follow that the 6,128 families now under consideration should possess an average income of \$650 or \$700. This body of inhabitants forms a



full six-tenths of the growth of the City as the builders anticipated it.

The next most important element in that growth consists of (3,055) three thousand and fifty-five families who are to occupy 505 tenements, to be constructed at a cost of \$2,629,026, the average investment to provide a home for each family in this case being \$806, *plus* the cost of the land. Allow one-third as before to this latter item, and the cost of each home becomes \$1,075. Assume \$120 to be the average rent asked for such dwelling places, and it would appear that these 3,055 families do not command an average income in excess of \$450. These families form three-tenths of the City's growth for a year as foreseen by its builders. Thus, nine-tenths of the expected increase has been classified with a reasonable approximation to accuracy. The averages thus far submitted are not likely to be seriously misleading, since they represent varieties of construction and modes of life in which a uniform type is closely followed. Among those inhabitants composing the remaining tenth, incomes cover a wider range, but a comprehensive view even of these is by no means unprofitable. For 1,168 families the same number of private dwellings were built, costing \$4,660,388, the average cost of each dwelling being \$4,000. In order that these averages might not be misleading, the Commissioner of Buildings has, at my request, examined every permit issued by him during the year, and has arranged them upon certain suggestive bases of classification. This last

group of 1,168 families includes no permits for private dwellings whose construction cost over \$10,000. The average cost of dwellings costing less than \$10,000 each, occupied by one family is, therefore, \$4,000. While this figure represents the average cost of dwellings of this class, it would appear that the actual cost of the greater number of these dwellings was considerably less than the average. Otherwise the average would not have been drawn to a point so far below the maximum cost of \$10,000. These 1,168 families may be safely assumed to stand upon lots worth one-third of their cost. Thus, these 1,168 dwellings are to dwell in homes representing an average investment of \$5,333. Upon the basis of computation before employed the income of these families should average not far from \$2,000 per year. In fact, for reasons just suggested, these incomes range from a minimum of \$1,000 or less to a maximum rarely exceeding \$5,000 or \$6,000. And a greater number of these incomes undoubtedly falls below the average point of \$2,000. Perhaps the greater number would be found to be not far from \$1,500.

There remain 87 families, for whom 87 private dwellings, each costing \$10,000 or more, as estimated, were to be constructed. The aggregate value of these dwellings is \$1,135,500. The average value is \$13,000. Since the average rises so slightly above the minimum, it is clear that but few dwellings costing much more than \$10,000 were to be constructed. The detailed report of

the Commissioner mentions but three residences of high cost to be built respectively for \$35,000, \$40,000 and \$50,000. These 87 families represent an average investment for both the land and the house of \$17,333. An attempt to average the income of this class would be attended with less success than in any of the prior instances. The minimum cost of living for a family dwelling in one of these residences would not be far from \$6,000. Doubtless but a few of them spend as small a sum as this in a year.

The surmise that in some of its features building has been overdone is apparently verified by a study of the remaining permits. The 63 factories costing \$579,580, and the 158 shops costing \$121,445 call for so small a part of such a population as would be contained in the flats and tenements to be constructed, that we must believe that some of these latter will not be occupied at once. This conclusion accords with observation. At the same time the general magnitude of this sort of construction indicates the operation of those causes already spoken of which embarrass the growth of New York and promote the growth of Brooklyn. Manifestly the tenants of these numerous flats and the 1,168 families who are to dwell in the more modest residences belonging in part at least to the class which will not live in lower New York and which cannot endure the journey to the region above One Hundred and Tenth street.

For the twelve months ending November 30th,

1887, permits were issued for 4,246 buildings, to cost \$19,983,414. Among these are found dwellings for 9,585 families. Of these families, 2,856 are to dwell in 922 flats costing \$3,978,592, the average investment for each family being \$1,390 as against \$1,338 in 1888. Two thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight families are to dwell in buildings described as stores and flats, numbering 714, and costing \$4,838,938, the average investment for each family being \$1,691 as against \$1,752 in 1888. Two thousand three hundred and ninety-one families are to dwell in 377 tenements costing \$1,879,001, the average investment for a family being \$785 as against \$806 in 1884. There remain 1,372 families who are to dwell in the same number of dwellings, each costing less than \$10,000, and the aggregate cost being \$5,320,607, the average cost per family being \$3,877, as against \$4,000 in 1888. Finally, there are 97 families provided for by the same number of residences, each costing over \$10,000, and costing in the aggregate \$1,197,400, or on the average \$12,344 as against \$13,000 in 1888.

It will be noted that a general survey of these twelve months is decidedly like that for the twelve months ending upon November 30th, 1888.

Since December 1, 1886, therefore, permits have been issued for the accommodation of 20,042 families. The conclusion hinted at early in this message that present rate of growth of this city is in ex-

cess of 25,000 per year is more than supported by these figures.

The conclusions thus arrived at as to the present and future of Brooklyn are reinforced by observation of the life of the people as it ebbs and flows about us. Closer union with New York has—to put it paradoxically—removed us further from New York. The increased population, whose growth is undoubtedly stimulated by improved transit, consumes such a volume of home supplies that our local business has vastly augmented and varied. The tendency to visit New York for every sort of purpose declines. Closer alliance with New York means a more discriminating alliance and less general indiscriminate dependence on that city. This must ever be the rule of growth in great communities. It is the rule of national growth. Of the products of the West some must be shipped in undiminished bulk, but even these are so handled that a small room in New York suffices to accommodate enough buyers and sellers to dispose in one day of a year's crop. Other forms of product reach the East for consumption or export in a concentrated form. By the natural law of growth the process of concentration is constantly moving Westward in its place of performance to intercept the raw material at a point as near as possible to that of its production. Similar laws apply to New York and Brooklyn with unusual intensity. Obviously New York must be the clearing house and the site of the finer and more costly grades of industry. That it can-

not be the abode of large industrial activity demanding bulk or space is not less clear. Manufacturers who are to occupy much of the earth's surface, or whose products are bulky, must establish themselves elsewhere. Some of them must and will come to Brooklyn, and the population growing up about them will hereafter depend less and less upon New York for any except the finer bonds of relation which unify the diverse purposes and interests clustering around our majestic bay.

It has seemed best to dwell upon this topic of the City's present magnitude and general condition. Such a study of the people can hardly fail to enlighten those who conduct their affairs, or to arouse and stimulate a collective and aggressive public spirit, and a sentiment of just local pride, such as become a great community. Few revelations of the future are as clear as that the commanding, if not the overwhelming problems of politics, are to spring hereafter from such communities. The necessities of compact and highly-organized bodies of people; the vast private enterprises, as well as public works, which must minister to their daily wants; the stress of industrial competition among them; the pressure of class upon class; the jarring of interest upon interest; the demand for comprehensive, honest and far-sighted administration of their public affairs; the absolute need to maintain order upon its established foundations; the fierce contentions and uneasy vitality which accompany hasty or irregular municipal growth; these and other fea-

tures of city life, suggests much food for thought for the present and approaching generation of Americans. Since cities are to be so great a factor as well as so great a product in our material expansion, it follows that the government of cities is the one quarter of the political field in which American institutions must not fail ; for if popular self-government fails there it fails at the heart, at the centre and source of vital and nervous power. In cities, therefore, are to be met those trials whose issue will determine in what characters the later pages of American history are to be inscribed. To designate great cities as an evil, or as a peril, is to note but half their significance. If men, when massed together, are accessible to evil suggestions they are likewise accessible to that which is good. At all events, the problem is not obscure or hard to find. One might go farther and say that in the question of the future of our cities is involved more even than the destiny of popular self-government. It involves the success or the failure of all the agencies of progress and of enlightenment. The moral and spiritual interests of the people cannot be separated from those which fall within the scope of governmental influence. Moreover, these great populations will not remain at rest either materially or otherwise. Their condition will be one of advancement or of progressive demoralization and decay.

In its practical suggestions, such information as is given by these statistics is of much value. In earlier days the forecasts of coming greatness were



not and could not be accompanied by material provision for the future. They formed no basis for definite concrete policy. To-day the situation is changed. The vision of an approaching multitude casts before it the shadow of responsibility. Their well-being must be made secure. Nor is this obligation remote or of little present moment. Already our numbers and rank place us among the great, advanced and interesting communities of the civilized world. On the continent of Europe there can be found but six cities more populous than our own. The British Isles contain but one. Our place is surpassed only by that of the capitals of the great powers. What is done now, therefore, by way of provision for the Brooklyn of to-day as well as for the Brooklyn of the future, should be done in a manner befitting the character and needs of a numerous, permanent and expanding population. Heretefore the public works not less than the private enterprises of our countrymen have often been experimental and insufficient. Even those who dimly foresaw the magnitude of the future dared not prepare for all that seemed to them probable. Hence the varieties of effort to supply the people have usually proved inadequate. Demand has speedily overtaken the new methods of supply. There is more than one reason why this has been true. Not infrequently the means with which to make adequate provision did not exist. Often the drift of population or the general desire for some



new product or convenience has set all previous calculations at defiance. In public matters the necessity of submitting large propositions to minds not familiar with them has operated to the public disadvantage. Such a project as the Erie Canal or the Brooklyn Bridge is denounced for years as wild and extravagant. When completed, its capacity may almost at once be taxed to the utmost. It is now time to recognize that cities like ours are to be the homes of multitudes for successive generations—that the battle of civilization, of progress and of all that gilds the future with the light of hope must be fought out on this field. Here must be established the broad and sure foundations of systematic provision for those vital daily needs upon whose gratification depend comfort, health, contentment and peace of mind.

Neither is there now the excuse that resources are not at hand. Our credit is second to that of no existing community; the labor of those dwelling among us is not to be surpassed in intelligent and conscientious effectiveness; our frugality has produced at least one good result, for the cost of government to the citizen is less than in almost any other city. Comprehensive effort and manly determination alone are needed to begin the task of supplying Brooklyn with what is due to the city and its visible future. This task does not immediately involve any gigantic project. Extraordinary outlay, such as attended the establishment of the Park and

the construction of the Bridge, need not at once be contemplated. Doubtless other bridges will some day be built—and that day may be nearer than some imagine—but I speak now only of such general forms of improvement as are necessary to the prosperity of the whole city. In a previous message I have outlined one such proposition to your honorable body. In other communications I shall complete the list.

Respectfully,

ALFRED C. CHAPIN,

Mayor.

















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